

~~Top Secret~~**USSR-LEBANON: Warships in the Mediterranean**

The Soviets currently have seven major warships in the Mediterranean—somewhat below the daily average of nine last year. Two frigates, a destroyer, a minesweeper, and an intelligence collection ship are monitoring US warships and the situation in Lebanon.

Comment: The number of Soviet warships in the Mediterranean has remained at a fairly normal level throughout the crises in Lebanon this year. Several ships usually conduct close surveillance of US surface ships there. Moscow could quickly augment its forces in the Mediterranean in response to any increase in US naval forces.

SAUDI ARABIA: Military Planning

The Saudis are trying to improve their capability to counter Iranian military action against them in the event of the spread of the war. Early last month the Saudi Air Force conducted a large exercise that included fighter patrols defending against waves of "attacking" aircraft, according to the US defense attache. The 11-day exercise involved at least five squadrons.

Comment: Saudi Arabia has little capability to defend its oil facilities against a surprise Iranian airstrike. Saudi defenses are hampered by inadequate warning time, poorly trained personnel, and ineffective command and control procedures. Nonetheless, Saudi air defenses would be more effective against subsequent airstrikes because they would be in a higher state of readiness.

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